

Chelan County PUD Public Attitudes Study

November 2008



CHELAN COUNTY

**ROBINSON
RESEARCH**

Methodology

- Robinson Research was commissioned by Chelan County Public Utility District (PUD) to conduct a telephone survey with customers. The overall purpose of this study was to evaluate and track public attitudes regarding the PUD, customer service and energy issues.

Methodology

- This is the thirteenth wave of the study.

1989	1998	2006
1990	1999	2007
1992	2000	2008
1995	2001	
1997	2002	

- Telephone interviews were conducted at our facility in October of 2008.

Methodology

In all surveys, 400 interviews were conducted with Chelan County PUD customers. All respondents were screened for the following:

- To be the head of the household,
- To not be employed in market research, advertising, public relations or for a utility,
- To not have participated in a telephone survey on the subject of energy or energy utilities in the past year,
- To live in Chelan County.

Methodology

- No fewer than fifteen percent (15%) of the interviews were monitored in their entirety, and an additional ten percent (10%) were called back by a supervisor for verification of key points of the data. Interim trial runs of the data were cross-tabulated by interviewer as a quality assurance procedure.

Methodology

- A 400-sample survey has a margin of error of +/- 4.9% percent, which means that, in theory, results have a ninety-five percent (95%) chance of coming within +/- 4.9 percentage points of results that would have been obtained if all PUD residential customers had been interviewed.

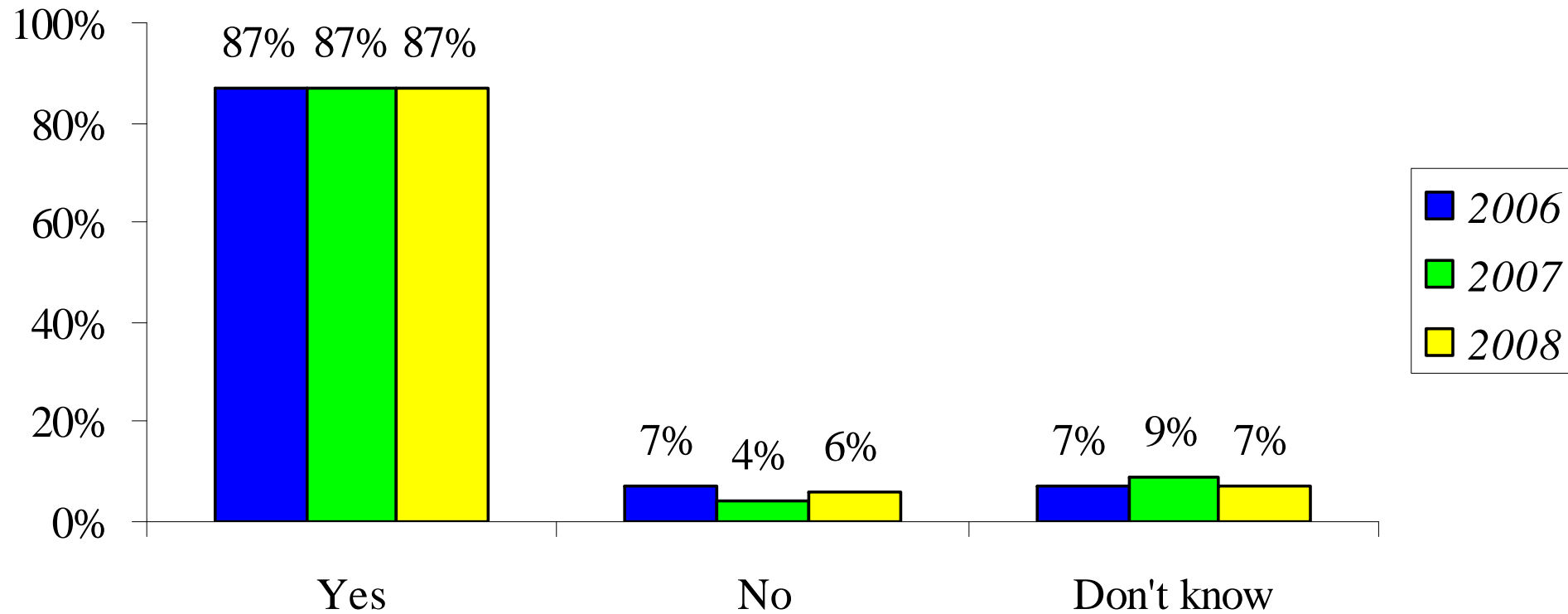
Survey History

- This study has roots in a statewide survey conducted for the Washington State PUD Association in 1984. Bill Robinson, President of Robinson Research worked on that study as Vice President of Market Trends in Seattle WA. In the benchmark 1984 study, Chelan County PUD scored higher than the statewide average on every tested service characteristic. Since 1984, Chelan County PUD has commissioned thirteen waves of the study. While the core of the tracking questionnaire has remained intact throughout the thirteen waves, there have been some modifications to the questionnaire in each wave of the study.

Recent Survey History

- The 2006 wave clearly showed across-the-board improvement over the 2002 wave and, in many cases, over the cumulative multi-wave average. The 2007 and 2008 waves are down slightly, but comparable to the 2006 wave. In the 2008 wave, customers were more likely to be concerned about rates and less supportive of investments in PUD infrastructure. Please note that the 2008 wave was conducted during the earliest months of a major recession and the lowest nationwide consumer confidence ratings in the history of the index.

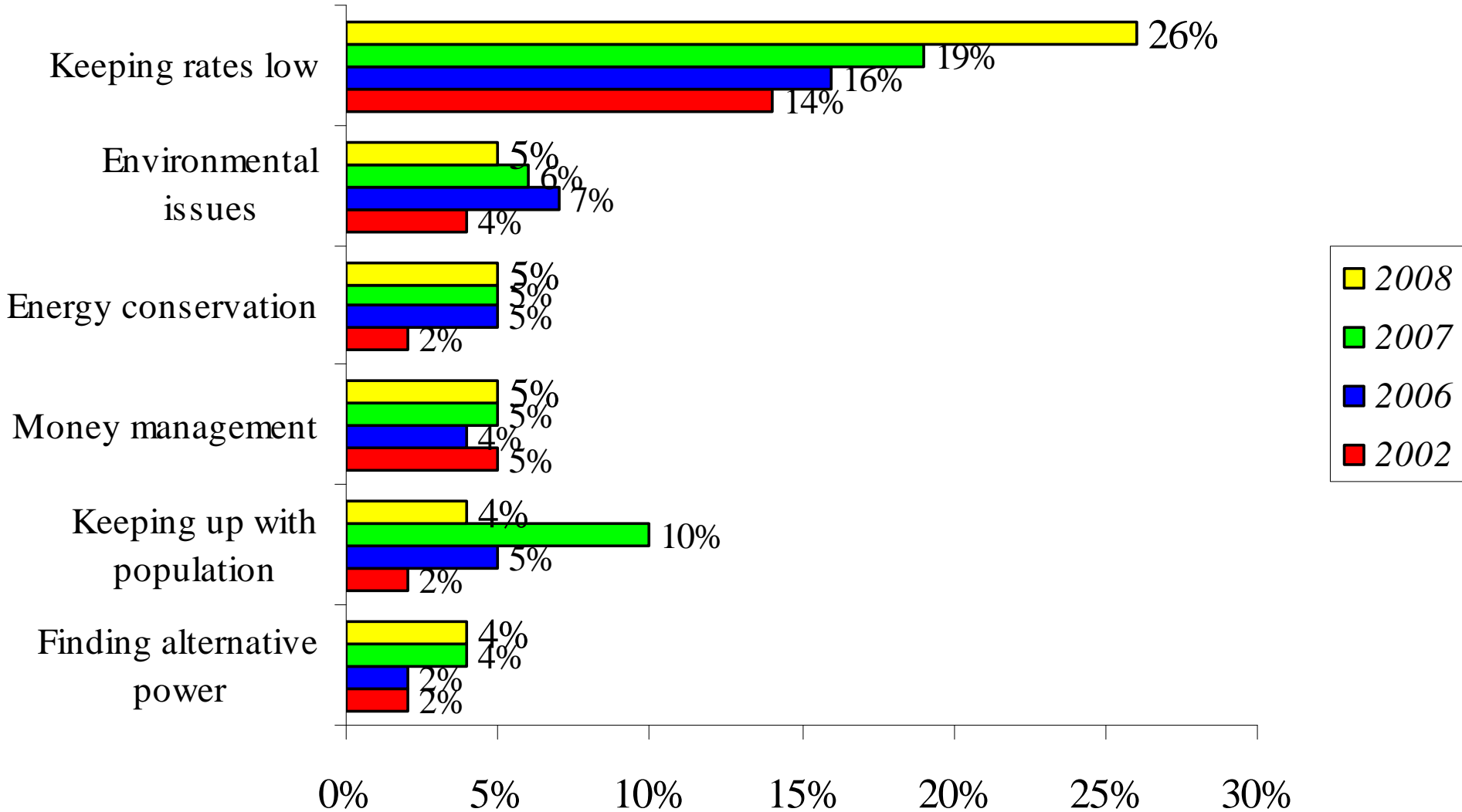
Q.1 Should Hydropower Be Considered A Renewable Energy Source Along With Wind And Solar, Or Not?



Q.2 What are the issues and concerns facing Chelan County PUD over the next several years?

Issues	2008	2007	2006	2002	Previous 9 Wave Average
Keeping rates low	34%	25%	16%	12%	26%
Ensuring enough energy/power is available	11%	8%	11%	6%	9%
Environmental issues	11%	8%	6%	6%	12%
High salaries/bonuses	11%	4%	2%	7%	-
Energy conservation	10%	8%	6%	3%	5%
Money management	10%	3%	6%	6%	6%

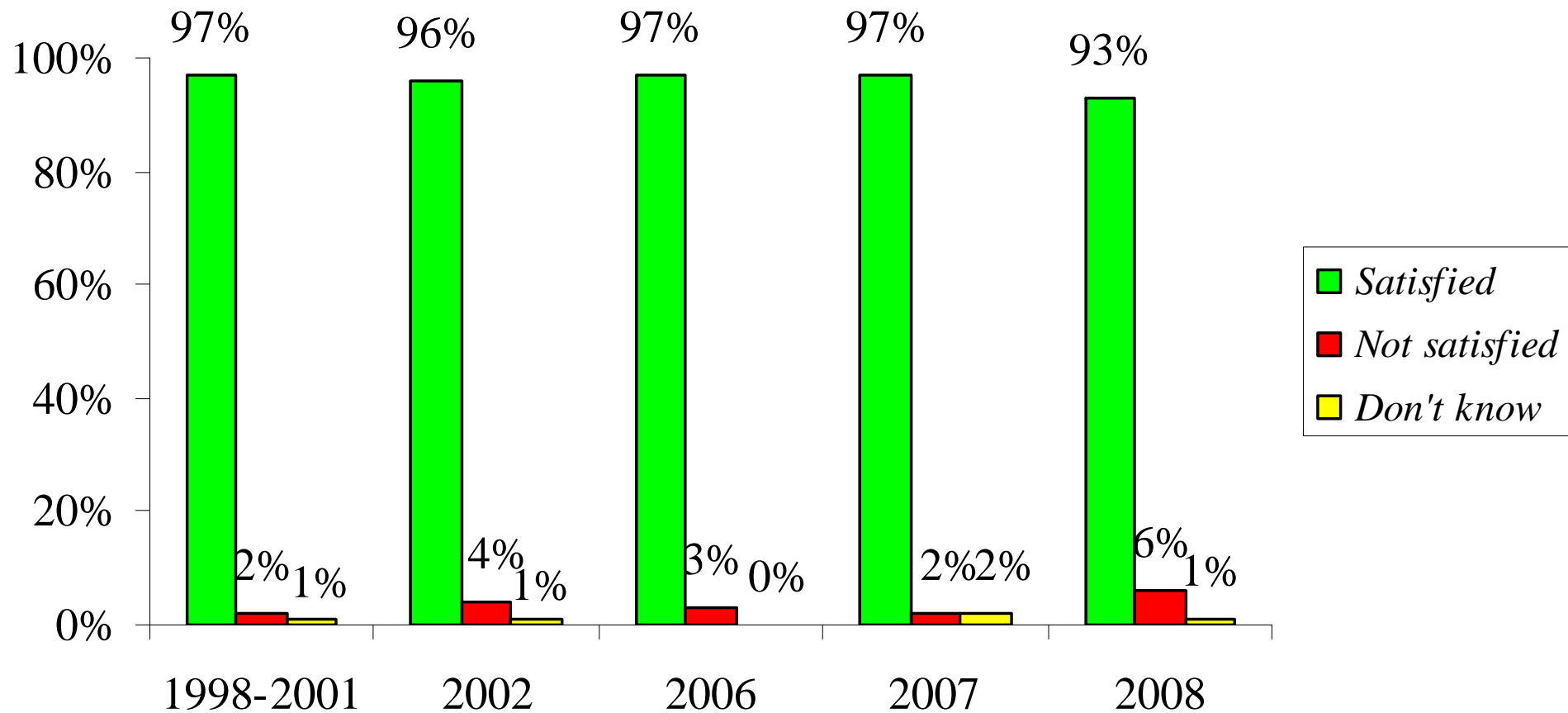
Q.3 In Your Opinion, What Is The Single Greatest Issue Facing The PUD In The Future?



Q.4-5 I am going to read you two statements, and I would like to know the degree to which you agree or disagree with each. Please rate each statement on a scale with one meaning strongly disagree and seven meaning strongly agree.

Statements	2008	2007	2006	2002	Previous 9 Wave Average
Q.4 Electric rates are reasonable	5.51	6.08	6.01	5.66	5.87
Q.5 Utility providing excellent customer service	5.70	6.23	6.17	5.76	6.18

Q.6 Have You Been Satisfied Or Not Satisfied With The Overall Service You Have Received From Chelan County PUD?



Q.7-16 I am going to read you a list of words or phrases that could describe Chelan County PUD. After I read each one, please tell me whether or not you believe the phrase describes the PUD.

Descriptions	2008	2007	2006	2002	Previous 9 Wave Average
Q.11 Friendly	93%	92%	91%	88%	90%
Q.14 Professional	91%	93%	94%	85%	90%
Q.8 Knowledgeable about energy	90%	93%	93%	93%	91%
Q.7 Community minded	86%	87%	90%	77%	84%
Q.13 Hard working	86%	80%	84%	73%	75%
Q.10 Environmentally responsible	84%	87%	89%	84%	84%
Q.16 Efficient	75%	81%	84%	72%	82%
Q.12 Having good public communication	72%	80%	80%	59%	81%
Q.15 Believable in what they say	72%	78%	78%	52%	79%
Q.9 Innovative	72%	76%	81%	68%	62%
Grand Mean	82.1%	84.7%	86.4%	75.1%	81.8%

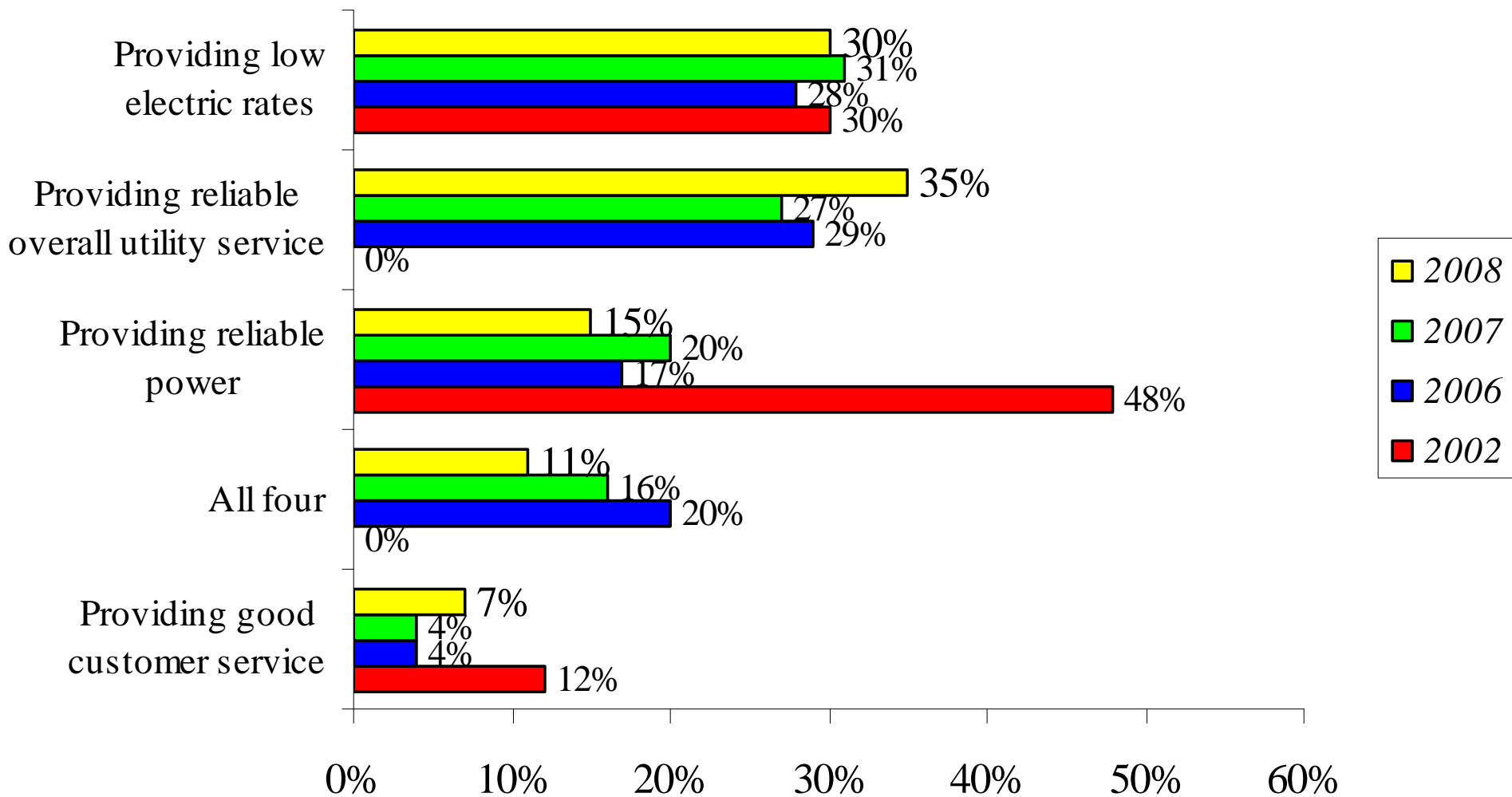
Q.17-27 Thinking specifically of Chelan County PUD, I would like you to tell me how well they perform in a variety of areas. Please use a scale of one to seven, with one meaning they perform poorly and seven meaning they perform very well.

Areas	2008	2007	2006	2002	Previous Waves Average
Good customer service on most recent contact	6.20	6.36	6.39	6.21	6.32
Providing reliable electrical service	6.18	6.47	6.57	6.47	6.54
Providing good customer service	6.10	6.30	6.21	6.03	6.20
Providing reliable water/wastewater service	6.00	6.07	6.08		
Prompt restoration of electricity	5.97	6.19	6.36	6.39	6.48
Helping salmon survival	5.92	5.94	5.95	5.90	
Providing a useful web site	5.87	6.10	5.92		
Charging reasonable electric rates	5.83	6.01	6.20	5.97	6.05
Being involved in the community	5.73	5.85	5.98	5.69	5.90
Providing reliable fiber-optic system	5.64	5.69	5.37		
Providing help with conservation	5.63	5.83			

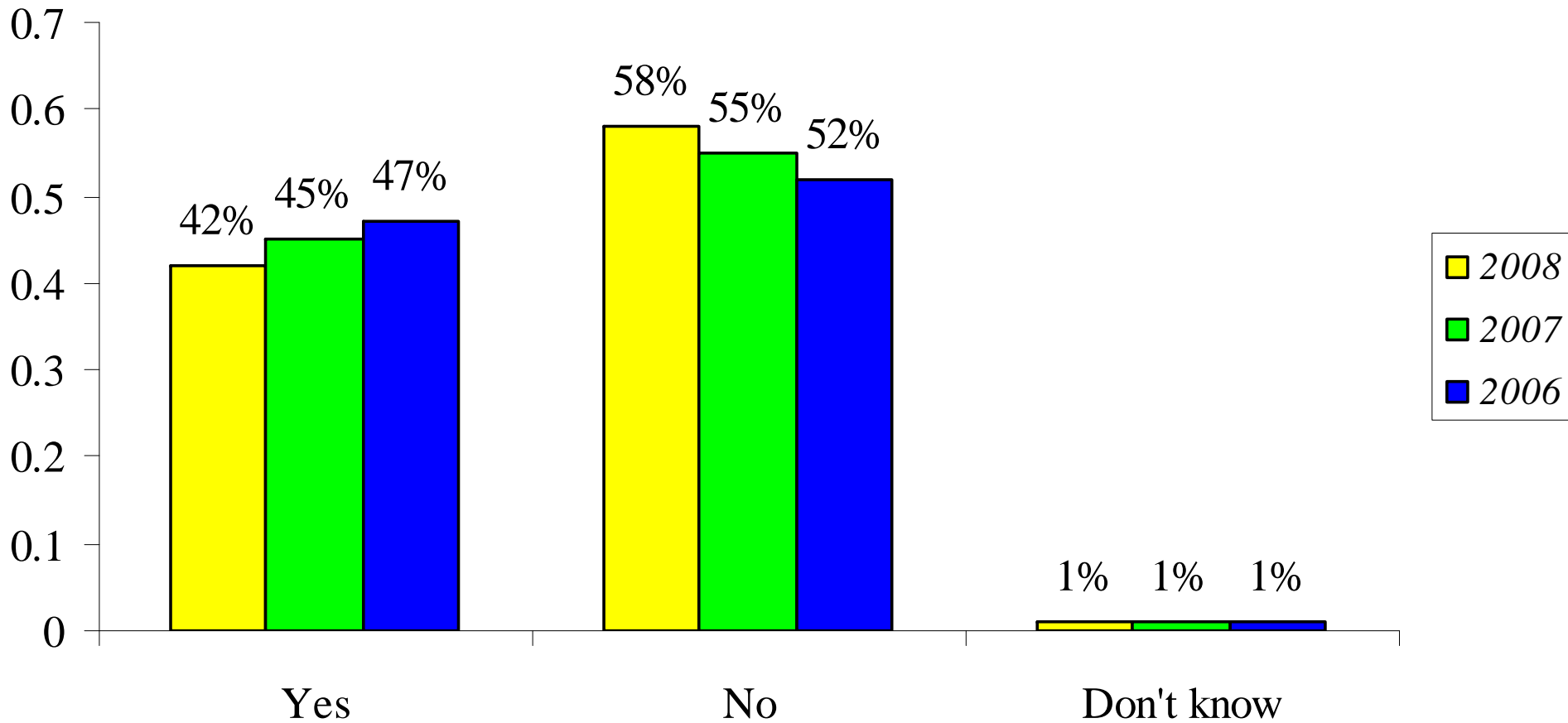
Q.28 Your overall assessment of the job Chelan County PUD is doing

Area	2008	2007	2006	2002	Previous 9 Wave Average
Overall assessment of the job Chelan County PUD is doing	5.82	6.10	6.17	5.76	6.20

Q.29 Which Of The Following Four Qualities Should Chelan County PUD Focus On Most?



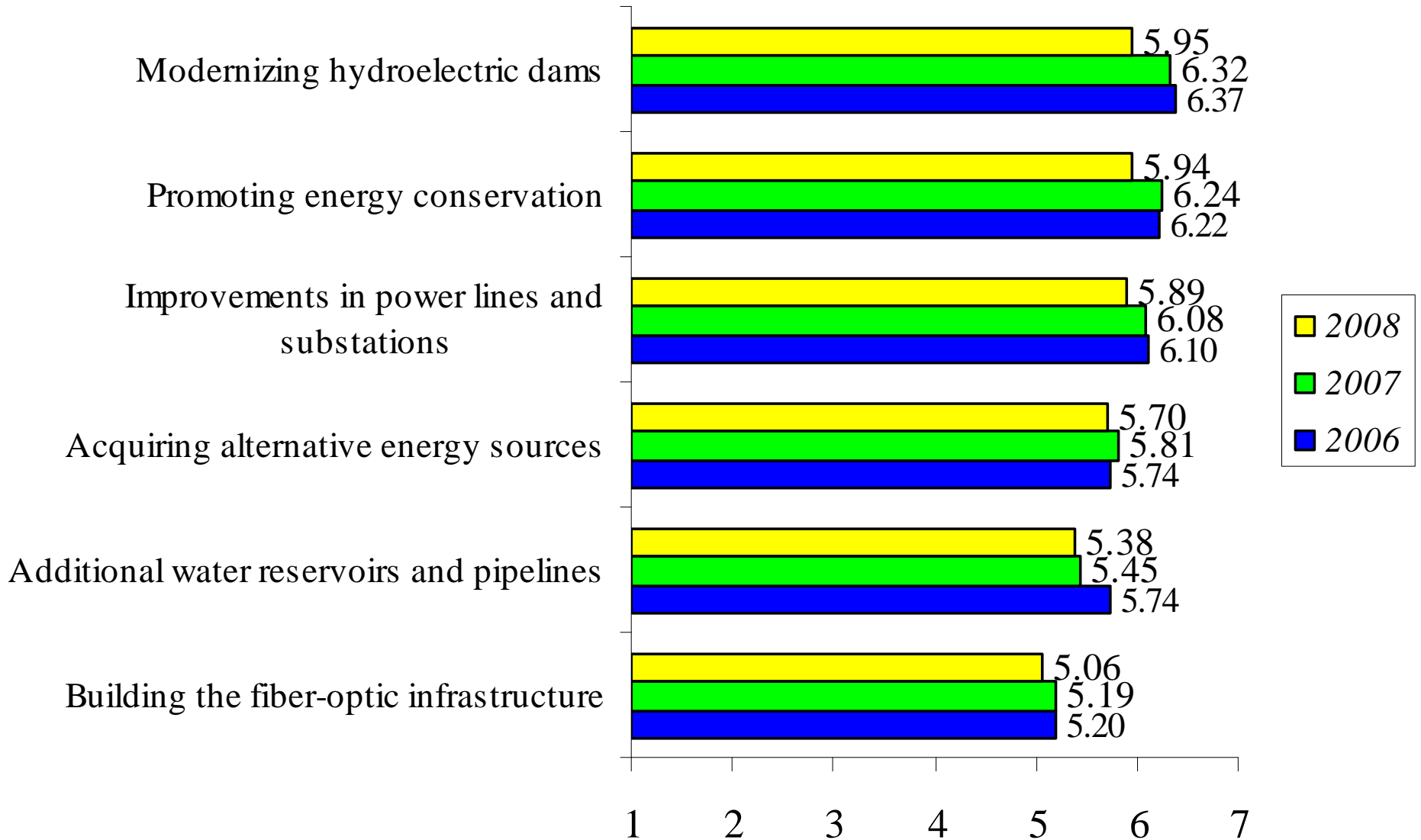
Q.30 In The Past 12 Months, Have You Contacted Chelan County PUD For Any Reason?



Q.31 For what reasons have you recently contacted Chelan County PUD?

Reasons	2008	2007	2006	2002	Previous 9 Wave Average
Power outage	13%	20%	6%	9%	7%
Billing concern	11%	8%	13%	19%	5%
Request for service or information	9%	10%	18%	24%	24%
Problem or complaint	5%	5%	6%	3%	4%
To make payment arrangements	4%	1%	1%	4%	2%
Water leak	1%	1%	4%	1 resp	1%
Weatherization	1%	1%	1%	-	-
SNAP sign-up or inquiry	1%	1 resp	1%	1 resp	-
Park reservations or information	1%	-	1%	-	-
Energy conservation	-	1%	1%	1%	1%

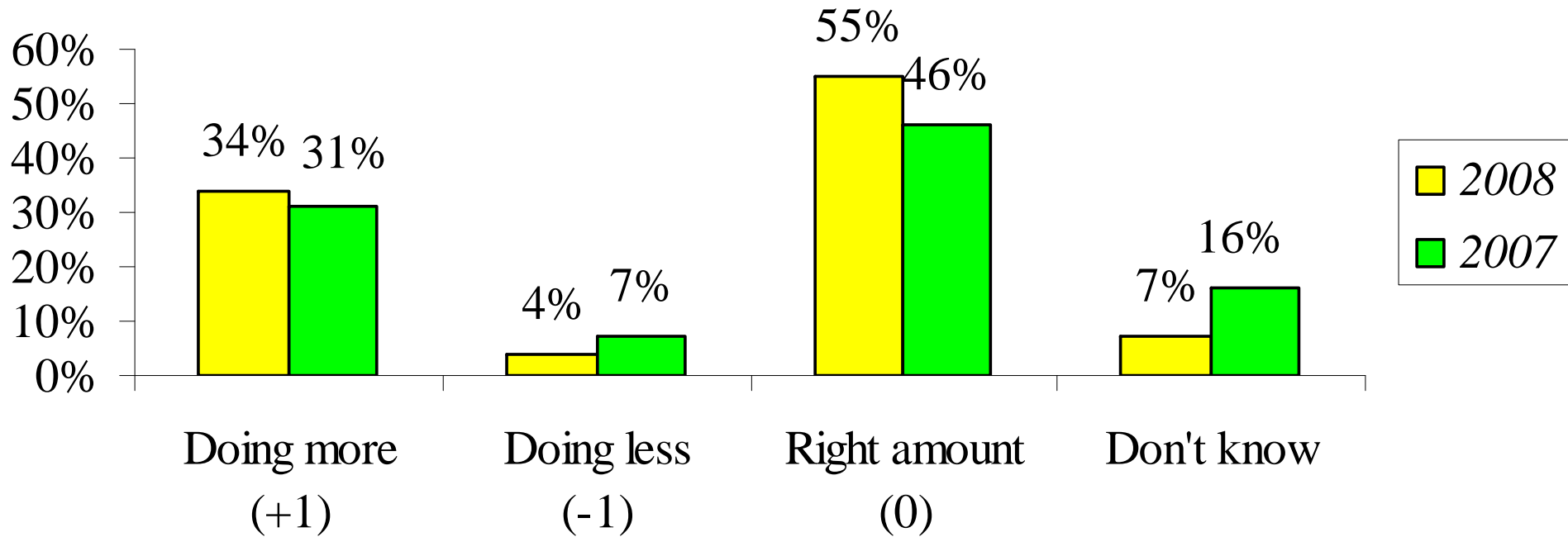
Q.32-37 Support For Financial Investments In PUD Services



Q.38 Should Chelan PUD Be Doing More, Less Or Is It Doing The Right Amount To Encourage Conservation?

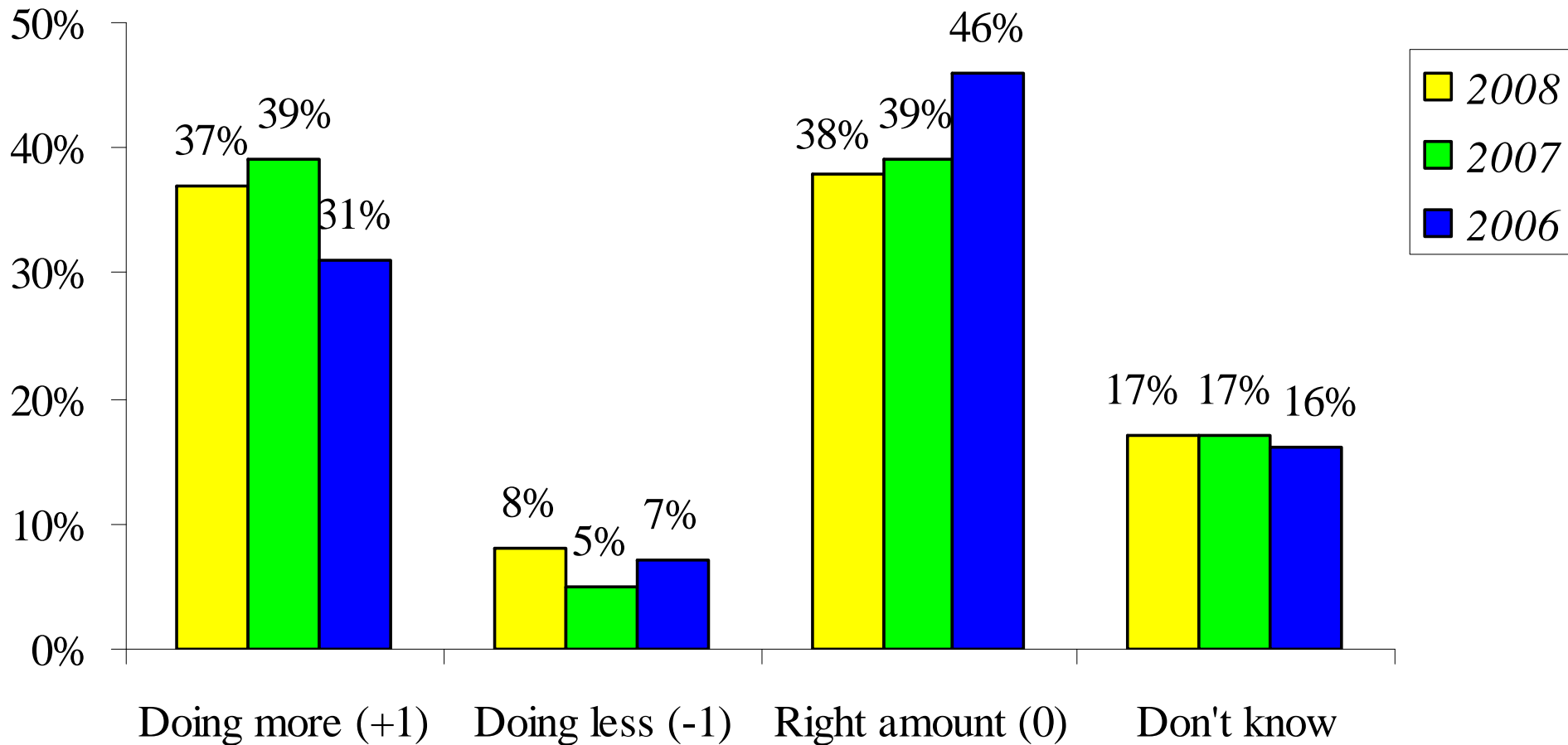
2008 Mean 0.32

2007 Mean 0.46

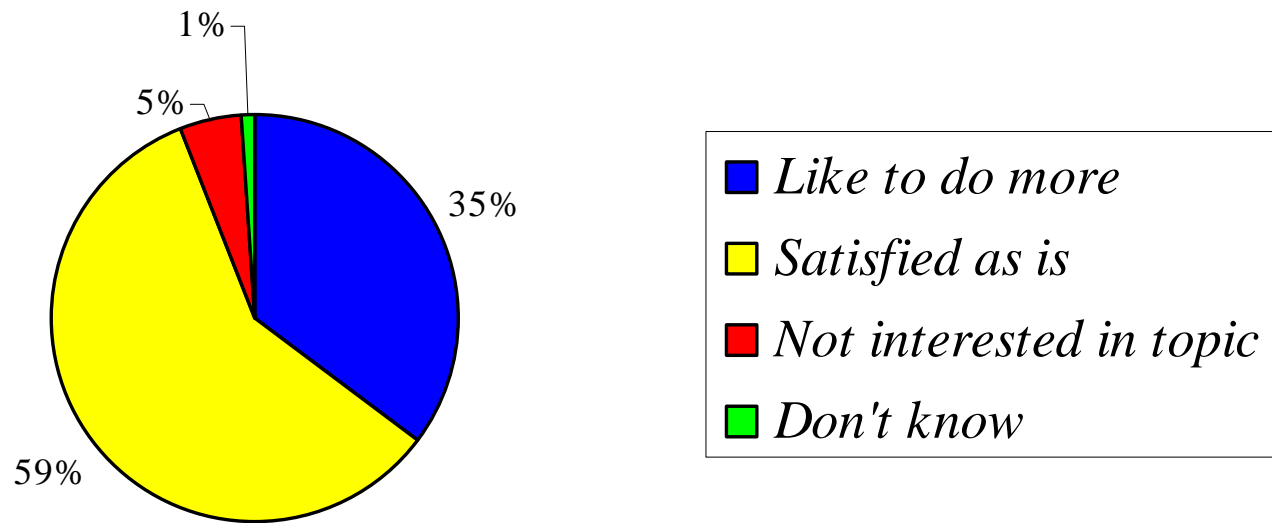


Q.39 Do You Think Chelan PUD Should Be Doing More, Less Or Is Doing The Right Amount To Encourage Development Of New Technologies?

2008 Mean 0.34
2007 Mean 0.40
2006 Mean 0.29



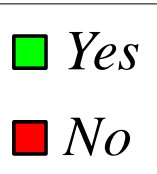
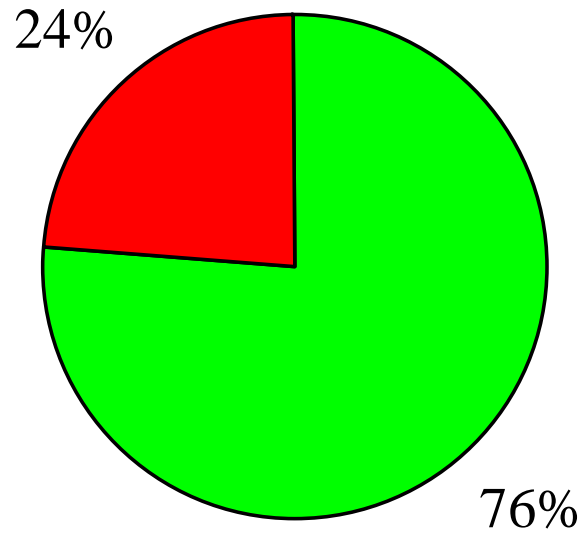
Q.40 When It Comes To Conserving Energy, Which Of The Following Three Statements Matches Your Personal Feeling?



Q.41 What is the biggest obstacle to conserving energy for you?

Obstacles	%
Expense	41%
Don't know what to do	34%
Inconvenience	19%
Don't know/Refused	6%

Q.42 Have You Replaced Any Bulbs With CFL's?



Q.43 For what reasons have you not replaced any of the bulbs in your house?

Cost too much	28%
Pleased with the bulbs I have	24%
Light from CFLs different	15%
Electricity cheap, don't need to conserve	7%
Don't like the way they look	7%
CFL's contain mercury	5%
Didn't know they exist	5%
Don't work with dimmer switch	3%
Didn't know they fit standard fixtures	3%

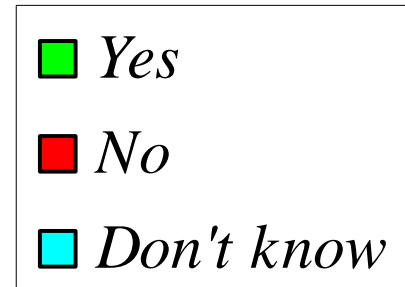
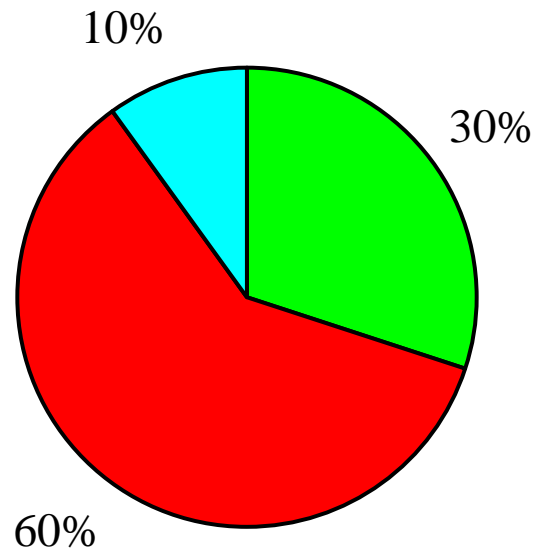
Q.44 Does The PUD Have A Program To Promote Alternative Energy?



Q.45 Can you tell me the name of the PUD's program to encourage alternative energy sources?

Name	%
SNAP	14%
Sustainable Natural Alternative Power	2%
Other	<1%
Don't know	15%

Q.46 Would You Be Willing To Add A Payment Of \$5 To Your Bill To Support Development Of Alternative Energy?



Q.47 If there were one improvement you could make to PUD parks, what would it be?

Suggestion	%
Parks dirty	5%
More BBQ's/picnic areas/shelters	5%
More parking	4%
More playground equipment	3%
Boat launches need repair	2%
More hiking trails	2%
More lighting	2%
Add restrooms	2%
No improvement needed	1%
Don't know/Refused	63%

Demographics

- The average reported combined annual household income was \$51,840, lower than the previous two waves, but considerably higher than the eight-wave average of \$39,077.
- As with all waves, half (50%) of the respondents were female (a gender quota was employed).
- 55% Wenatchee
- 22% Leavenworth
- 16% Chelan
- 7% Manson

(Sample size per area was based on the percentages in the customer sample lists provided by Chelan County PUD.)

Conclusions

- Satisfaction among Chelan County PUD customers is remarkably high, considering the financial climate in which the survey was conducted. At the time the 2008 wave of this study was in the data collection phase, national indexes of consumer confidence were at an all-time low, the stock market had recently shown startling drops, major financial institutions were determined to be insolvent, and the term “credit crisis” was prominent in all the media. Although it had not yet been officially declared, the fact that the U.S. was in a deep recession was being demonstrated on a daily basis.

Conclusions

- Whenever nationwide consumer confidence takes a noteworthy dip, consumers' attitudes toward institutions and utilities are affected. Chelan County PUD customers saw an increase in electric rates between the 2007 and 2008 waves of the survey and the effects of that are also apparent.
- It is the considered opinion of Robinson Research that Chelan County PUD is currently satisfying the vast majority of its customers who are capable of being satisfied.